

Minutes of the Special Meeting February 23, 2004

City Hall Second Floor Conference Room, 1070 Sixth Avenue

CALL TO ORDER – 6:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Warden, Feierbach, Mathewson, Metropulos

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Bauer

Staff Present: City Clerk Cook.

Interview candidates for the Arts Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission (Adult and Youth seats) for seats expiring on March 1, 2004.

Jackie Kimmey (Parks and Recreation Youth, Incumbent) stated that it has taken her a year to get used to working with the adults on the commission, and admitted she was intimidated at first. She stated that her contribution to the commission this year was the successful youth dance held recently. She would like to work on ongoing issues such as the planning for Belameda Park, and that although she had no other specific ideas, she would participate in anything presented. She noted that the commission's focus was on parks, and cited examples such as the trail system and the new equipment recently installed in various playgrounds. She stated that she adds value to the commission through her year-long experience, her input on the teen dance and Belameda Park, and the youth perspective. She noted that she sometimes talks to other kids about her commission experience, but that they do not often have input for her to bring forward to the rest of the commission.

Zachary Lassman (Parks and Recreation Youth) stated that he has participated in activities in the community. He said that although he has not attended a commission meeting, his understanding is that the commission's role was to observe local parks for improvement. He said he would like to have a voice for youth, that he has done a lot of volunteering, and being on the commission would be good for future college applications. He stated that he was open and honest, and was not afraid to speak up. He said that he has good public speaking abilities and interacts well with adults. He noted that a teen center would be a positive thing, and that although he thought there were enough parks in Belmont, there was always room for more. He did not have any specific ideas for the commission, but would work on a teen center if it became a project. He noted that he lived in Los Angeles until age seven, and that Belmont had more local parks.

George Kranen (Parks and Recreation), stated that he likes participating in civic affairs. He commented that although he did not get appointed to the Finance Commission, he would continue attending their meetings as he finds their issues interesting. He noted that the Parks and Recreation Commission is functioning well. He stated that if appointed he would use it as a podium for getting youth appointed to other commissions, and that he supports a separate youth commission. He noted that the commission is dealing with interesting issues such as Patricia Wharton Park and the Gateway project. When asked which incumbent should not be appointed to make a space for himself, he responded that it should be Judy King because it seemed that he had done something to irrevocably irritate her. He stated that he would bring 2 ½ years of prior experience to the commission, and that it would not take him long to get back up to speed. He said that he would bring jocularly to the commission, which he felt was lacking, and would also bring his open space experience from the San Juan Canyon Trust. He enjoyed his work with the Open Space Recreation Task Force, and would encourage the eventual execution of its recommendations, which are currently on hold. He recommended an update of the Parks and Recreation element of the General Plan. He noted that the challenge for additional parks was finding vacant land, and suggested that the City could acquire the vacant lot on Davis Drive and develop it as a soccer or softball field. He described the recent issue of the update of the College View Playground, and complimented the commission for listening to all sides. He stated that kids having fun was not a noise problem.

Judie Davis (Arts, Incumbent) stated that she has enjoyed working on the Sister Cities Committee. She distributed an article about a "peace pole" in another city (article on file with the City Clerk's Office), and suggested that Belmont could acquire and install one in Twin Pines Park, near the Senior and Community Center. She stated that the Arts Commission was task oriented, and new members should be people who would be easy to work with and who bring new ideas. She stated that the Art in Public Places policy was a good addition for Belmont, and commended Commissioner Murray for her work on that policy. She enjoyed the recent visioning process. She stated that the challenge in Belmont was how to make the arts more visible with limited resources, and stated that the recent gathering of artists was a good start. She would support the implementation of an art fee on new developments as a way to fund public art.

Jonathan Gervais (Parks and Recreation) stated that he has worked in a professional capacity for various parks agencies for many years. He acknowledged that serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission would be good for his career, but would also allow him to give back to the community on a personal level. He stated he has not attended a commission meeting, but has worked with other commissions in other jurisdictions, so is familiar with the process. He stated that he moved to Belmont

because of its park-like setting, and that parks reflect back on a community. He stated that the fields appear to be in good shape, and Belmont has ample open space. He recommended that resources should be used to maintain and preserve what you have, then expand programs incrementally, and add park space as money becomes available. He added that if there is a funding deficit, you should try to do more with less, and defer projects. He concluded by saying that parks are about people, and that people need to care about parks in order to preserve them.

Christopher Lyon (Parks and Recreation Youth), stated that he has lived in Belmont for seven months and would like to give something back to the community. He clarified that he has not attended a meeting, but reviewed minutes and agendas from 2003. He stated that parks are good for people. He would like to see more youth events, including dances. He noted that the commission is proactive in the facilitation of parks, and that he could provide insight as a young person on this issue. He suggested that the City could take over After School sports. He described a plant-a-tree project he was involved with when he lived in Modesto. He noted that when coaching fees are reduced, there are fewer coaches available. He stated he would participate in commission meetings, since not doing so would defeat the purpose of being there.

Mike Dutto (Parks and Recreation, Incumbent), stated he would like to be reappointed to work on unfinished business such as Belameda Park, athletic field renovations, and he would like to eventually see Barrett redone. He noted the commission's recent work on the playground renovation project. He stated that with regard to field noise, people should expect noise if they move in next to a school, and that he has not heard complaints. He added that noise travels in canyons. He stated there is no area of expertise missing from the commission, that it is advisory only, and that it consists of normal people bringing ideas. He stated he was disheartened by the outcome of the Outdoor Recreation Task Force. He responded that the concept of "micro" parks is a good one, but he is unsure how practical they might be. He stated that the youth commissioners have had good ideas and have provided good perspective, that they need to be outgoing, and that the commission has encouraged their participation.

Judy King (Parks and Recreation, Incumbent), stated that she is reapplying because things are not done yet. She is excited about the plans for Belameda Park, Patricia Wharton Park, and the Gateway area. She added that she would like to see something done to improve the area surrounding the "little pencil house". She would like to hold a picnic for commissioners that could include families, and would like to see the City make use of more volunteers. She noted that the City does not take advantage of people with expertise in various areas, and that people may get discouraged if they offer services that are not utilized. She commented that commissioners should be out

and about and available to the public, like ambassadors. She said the commission is working well together, and everyone is following through with park assignments. She noted that the City has qualified to be a Tree City and the paperwork just needs to be submitted. In response to the work of the youth commissioners, she stated that being a commissioner probably looks good on college applications, that they do not give much input on issues, but the recent youth dance was a good idea. When asked about meeting absences, she stated that she believes there is language in the City Code about missing three meetings, and unexcused absences are problematic. She noted that the rules for the Senior Advisory Committee indicate that anyone missing three meetings has vacated the seat. She added that missing half the meetings is not acceptable.

Lisa Chin (Arts), stated she likes Belmont because every house is different, and she likes the landscaping. She commented that she has attended one Arts Commission meeting, and also attended the gathering of artists held recently. She noted that she was encouraged to apply by other commissioners, and her interest was in the area of youth and art in education. She described her experience as a mentor for children through the de Young Museum in San Francisco when she was in college. She likes the idea of commissioners pitching ideas and dividing tasks. She stated she recognized Belmont as an arts community when house hunting, and noted that other artists will see that as well. She stated that a community does not need public art on every corner, and that art can be creative, such as the fire hydrants. As a way to deal with limited resources, she suggested partnering with the senior housing communities for volunteers. She added that she is a jewelry designer, and that she views art as a way to blend culture.

Miriam Morgan (Parks and Recreation), stated she was interested in community service. She noted that the parks and recreation department has many programs for seniors and adults, but is lacking in activities for pre-teens and teens. She noted that there were ample organized sports programs, but not enough leisure activities. She likes the woodsy, less developed parks in Belmont. She commented that Waterdog Lake has potential for additions such as a picnic table or benches. She likes Belmont's trail map, and noted the trails need more public exposure. She suggested hiring a high school or college student to be available at Barrett for unorganized activities. She would support a skate park. When asked about noise issues from playing fields, she stated that the noise kids make when playing is acceptable, because children are the future.

Donna Schroeder (Arts or Parks and Recreation), stated that although she has not attended commission meetings, she reviewed recent agendas and minutes. She stated Belmont is a unique community, and she has a desire to contribute. She commented that she is happy with the final vision statement. She has worked on many committees, and does her best work when immersed. She likes the beautification that

has taken place in Belmont over the past five years, such as a grade separation and downtown improvements. She would like to find more creative ways to get people in and out of town. She stated that art is not what drew her to Belmont, but that it is a necessary component for a community. She likes the people here, and likes to shop in Belmont. She described the medical education business she started recently, which has grown. She added that her business is doing well, and that she would like to get back into committee work, which she did in college. She knows the parks and trails as a runner, and that she would like to see Belmont have more organized events. She is familiar with the dog park, and has friends who use and enjoy it.

ADJOURNMENT at this time being 9:13 P.M.

Terri Cook

City Clerk

Meeting Tape Recorded

Tape #572